





Photo: Jeff Kardas



A 100% MOMENT

Congrats

Team France: Gautier Paulin, Benoit Paturel.

Team Holland: Glenn Coldenhoff, Brian Bogers.

Team USA: Cooper Webb, Alex Martin.



@ride100percent

www.ride100percent.com

Photo: Jeff Karda



Pondering at the Park...

Cooper Webb has had an astonishing 2016 and there was a heavy element of sympathy for the 250SX & MX Champion at Maggiora Park after his minor slip saw Team USA's remarkable turnaround at the Motocross of Nations stall and become rooted, like the twenty year old's Yamaha on the Turn 6 haybale. Webb can take a lot from this year for future seasons...and especially the sour emotion in Italy

Photo by Clemens Bolz



AMA-MX





MotoGP

By in a blur...

MotoGP might well have been a carnival of spoils and treats in 2016 but there has also been a backbone of podium consistency that means even Valentino Rossi's four consecutive rostrum appearances – the last a third place in Aragon - keeps him well behind Marc Marquez in the standings and to the tune of 52 points. Now the turn of the flyaways

Photo by CormacGP







The matter of inches...

Chihiro Notsuka achieves brief infamy at the 2016 MX of Nations by landing on Team USA's Jason Anderson mere seconds after the Husky rider has won the second moto. Fortunately a slight concussion is the only damage as the American squad's chances of success at Maggiora Park took a harder hit.

Whose fault? Anderson slowed on the jump landing but Notsuka had been lapped and had the board, flag and celebratory fire jets to know the race was done

Photo by JP Acevedo www.mx1onboard.com



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SBK

FASSI FRENCH ROUND

MAGNY-COURS · OCTOBER 2-3 · RND 11 of 13

Race one winner: Chaz Davies, Ducati

Race two winner: Chaz Davies, Ducati



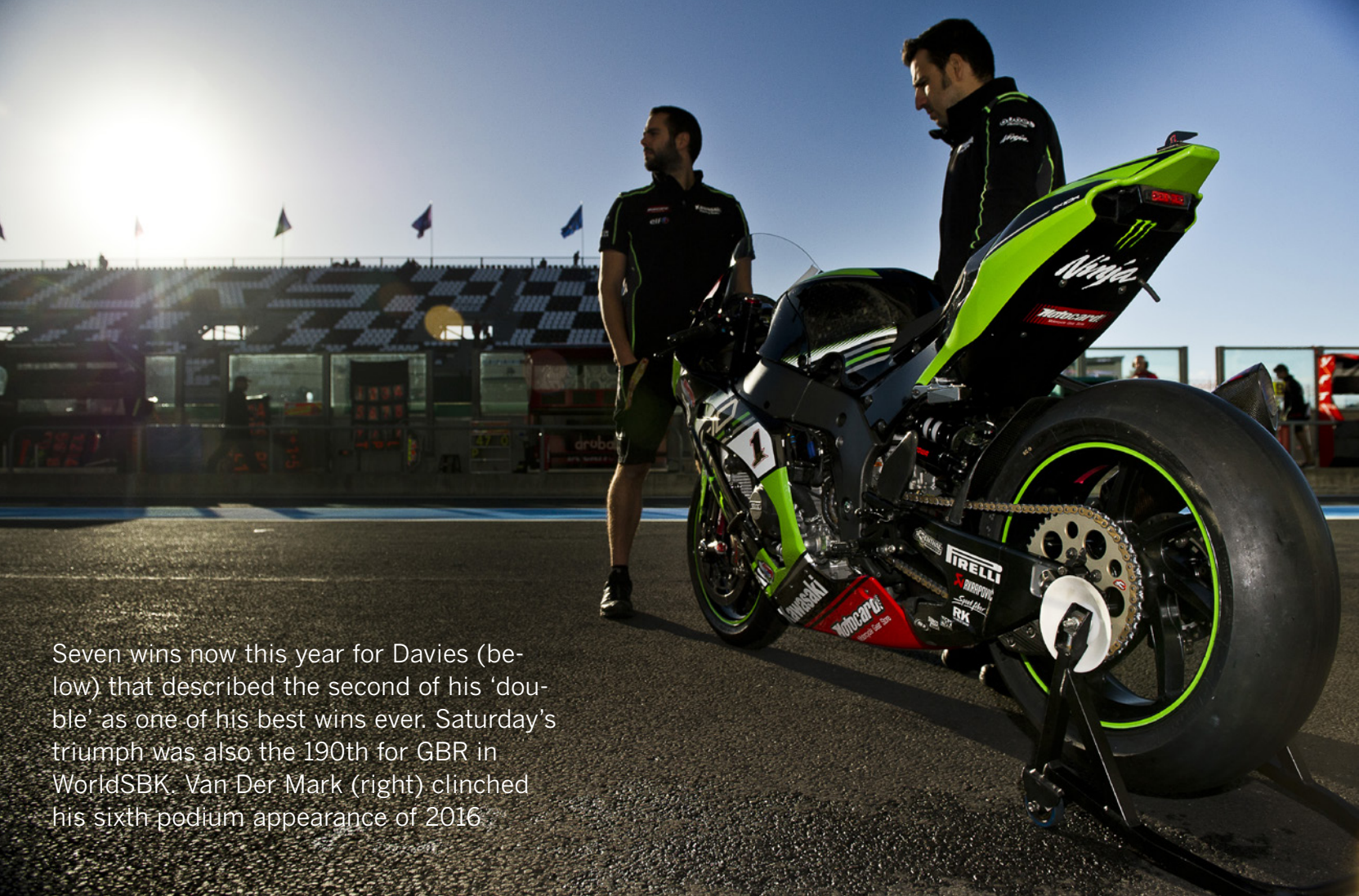
SBK FRA

CHAZ DAVIES IS STARTING TO THROTTLE WORLDSBK AFTER HIS THIRD WIN IN FOUR RACES. TOO LITTLE TOO LATE FOR THE WELSHMAN? WITH 48 POINTS DIVIDING JONATHAN REA AND TOM SYKES HEADING INTO THE PENULTIMATE ROUND AT JEREZ, SPAIN IN TWO WEEKS IT LOOKS LIKE THE SERIES WILL BE A GREEN SHADE ONCE MORE. GRAEME BROWN WAS AT MAGNY-COURS LAST WEEKEND WITH LENS IN PLACE AND EAR LOCKED TO THE GROUND



DEADLY DAVIES

Blog by Graeme Brown
Photos by Kawasaki/GeeBee/
Ducati Corse/Honda/Milagro



Seven wins now this year for Davies (below) that described the second of his 'double' as one of his best wins ever. Saturday's triumph was also the 190th for GBR in WorldSBK. Van Der Mark (right) clinched his sixth podium appearance of 2016





Superpole saw Jonathan Rea sit No.1 on the grid for the first time in over a year. He would finish 4th for what was only the sixth time since joining Kawasaki (47 races until that point) where he had not made the top three



SBK FRA



81 podiums for former world champion Sykes who needs two more trophies this season to equal the 18 he posted in his title winning pomp back in '13





GETTING TO THE SHARP END...

By Graeme Brown

At the start of the year I spoke about the general feeling within the WorldSBK press room that Chaz Davies was a hot tip for the 2016 title. Most people had based that on his end of 2015 form but that promise hasn't really materialised and a series of DNF's mid season put paid to any serious challenge to the Ninja masters, Rea and Sykes.

That series of hiccups seems to have passed and the Welshman has won three from the last four races, and as was pointed out, they were all different; the dominant win in Lausitz followed by the tactical wet-dry race on Saturday and the patient victory on Sunday where he stalked the Kawasaki team-mates and waited until they inevitably tripped each other up.

Saturday's race at Magny Cours was utterly enthralling. As we all scurried about on the grid the sun came out and immediately started to dry the sodden track. Almost everyone went for a full wet set up. Davies went for inters and after a couple of laps was languishing at the back of the field amongst the perennial also-rans.

It was a real privilege to watch from trackside as, at the front, Leon Camier and Alex De Angelis stayed the course on their wet set up and were riding right on the limit. Through my long lens I could see the bike moving around so much as the rain tyres started to overheat and edge grip became a luxury instead of an everyday staple. It was particularly noticeable as they exited the long left hander at Turn 8 which, under hard acceleration, is followed by an immediate change of direction, right and back left again onto the drag up to Imola. To watch these guys ride with such aggression and skill at close quarters really is awe-inspiring.

In the end Davies' gamble paid off and like the fabled tortoise, albeit a very very fast one, he made his way through the field and romped home for the win.

Sunday's race was a bit more standard fare but Sykes was perplexed at his team-mate's aggressive riding in the closing laps which resulted in Davies getting past and slipping free for the double win. Rea on the other hand acknowledges Sykes as his main championship rival and is living by the mantra that you have to keep your rivals behind you at all times and the first person you have to beat is your team-mate. It is all shaping up for the next race in Jerez to once again be Kawasaki's glory fields. In 2013 Sykes clinched the title there and last year Rea took the riders' Championship with Kawasaki taking their first manufacturers title as well.

From a selfish point of view I like each championship to be decided one race at a time. It's a lot less stressful as each win means pictures of t-shirt swaps, special helmets, special flags and elaborate celebrations. You have to find out from each team where each rider has planned to do their 'thing' – sadly none of this is spontaneous anymore – and make sure you get to that corner before the race finishes.

In Jerez, it looks like everything is going to be settled, WorldSBK rider and manufacturer, WorldSSP rider and manufacturer and Superstock 1000 FIM Cup. By Sunday night I am definitely going to need a wee glass of the local sherry.

Whilst the racing this season is reaching its conclusion the focus has already turned to next year as it was announced just prior to this weekends event that Dorna would introduce



a Supersport 300 category in 2017. This was something I wrote about back in early 2015 but it seems that the proposals have been a little watered down from what I first heard and I am not sure I see the long term benefit in what is currently proposed.

“In Jerez, it looks like everything is going to be settled...by Sunday night I am definitely going to need a wee glass of the local sherry.

The Superstock1000 FIM Cup will remain in the series and the European Junior Cup will be axed. The latter was a one-make series supported by Honda that offered a fixed cost European championship for young riders. The bikes were prepared, stored and transported to each circuit by the Racedays organization and was a real level playing field to develop new talent.

From what I understand the new SSP300 series will have no direct manufacturer support. It will be up to individual teams and riders to choose a bike and come and race. The intention is to limit costs but inevitably there will be one team, one rider that has the budget to go testing, to have more spare parts and so on. The homologated machinery is a complex mix of Honda CBR500R, Kawasaki Ninja 300, Yamaha R3 and KTM 390 each with different weight limits and technical regs. With the varied range of capacity in the machinery it is also going to be difficult to judge the level of parity in the levels of performance.

Furthermore it is only to run in Europe, so territories such as Thailand, India etc., where there is an interest in WorldSBK races and where these bikes have their main markets, will not be part of the series and therefore have no promotional potential. It seems that Dorna and the FIM, who set the technical regs, are working on a ‘suck it and see’ basis to gauge its popularity before expanding the series more. There seems to be some concern about the level of spectacle such small capacity production machines will generate. Another issue is that most budgets for racing across the WorldSBK programme are controlled through Europe where the market for these pocket rocket street racers is very limited. It seems 1000cc is still king in Europe.

On paper it sounds a great idea and time will tell if it is a success or not but I am always a believer in the idea that if you present a set of clear consistent rules for any championship then you will find teams and riders to fill the grid. The dilemma seems to be between allowing the manufacturers to promote production bikes by going racing and having a low cost level playing field to develop young riding talent. I don't think this current plan achieves either and a much bolder move is needed, as what we will gain seems to have been countered by what will be lost.



MX

MONSTER ENERGY MOTOCROSS

MAGGIORA PARK - SEPTEMBER 25th

Monster Energy winner: Tony Cairoli, ITA, KTM

MX2 winner: Jeremy Van Horebeek, BEL, Yamaha

MX Open winner: Jeffrey Herlings, KTM

Nations winners: France, Romain Febvre, Benoit Paturel, Gautier Paulin

FOX

TRENTINO

WORLD CUP
QARDA
TESTING UNIT

UFO

GBRYS

DUNLOP

PIRELLI

Airtech

ATHENA

GET

By Adam Wheeler, Photos by Ray Archer

THREE & A CROWD

I CAN RECALL TRYING TO THREAD THROUGH THE PADDOCK AT MAGGIORA PARK ON THE WAY BACK TO THE MEDIA CENTRE WONDERING WHERE WOULD BE THE BEST PLACE TO START FOR A REPORT ON THE 70TH MOTOCROSS OF NATIONS. THERE WERE HEADLINES ALL OVER THE PLACE BUT ASIDE FROM THE CRASHES, COLLISIONS, DUELS, STANDOUT PERFORMANCES AND CRACKLING ATMOSPHERE THERE WAS THE FACT THAT TEAM FRANCE COMBINED TO WIN THIS PRESTIGIOUS COMPETITION FOR THE THIRD YEAR IN A ROW AND ON THE LAST LAP OF THE LAST RACE. FASCINATING STUFF

OF NATIONS

2016 MXoN



PLAY

There is a moment in 1999 seminal sports movie 'Any Given Sunday' when coach of fictitious NFL franchise Miami Sharks Al Pacino delivers a stirring speech to his team on the significance and symbolism of life and success due to the proximity of the 'inches' around us. Classic Hollywood. But also with some philosophical heart and it was hard not to draw a parallel to the narrowest of margins that exist in sport through the drama of the 70th Motocross of Nations at Maggiora. A little faster or half a yard off-line and Team USA's Jason Anderson would not have been landed on by the naïve Chihiro Notsuka after winning the second moto and thus Cooper Webb would not have felt pressure-bound in his final race and made the slip that counted the twenty-two time winners away from the top spot. A couple of inches further out of the rut and Team Holland's Jeffrey Herlings might not have high-sided in his pursuit of Anderson and would have gone 1-1 to give the Dutch a first major success (and twelve years after their last Nations podium). The matter of inches that allowed Romain Febvre to pass Tommy Searle on the final lap of the last race of the day was instrumental in the French being able to record a third win in succession. Close stuff.

The magnificent stage of Maggiora Park did not have the amphitheatre intensity of Ernee in France twelve months earlier but the hillsides were awash with colour, smoke, flags, costumes and noise. There was appreciation for the 1986 American Dream Team and the Italian trio that tried to prevent the ushering of a new era of intensity in the sport. The official figure of 85,000 for both days did not seem like something from the realms of Pacino and – as it usually the case with this very special event on the FIM calendar (like the Isle of Man or Mugello MotoGP something that should be tasted by every motorcycling fan at least once) there were pockets of stories oozing from of the Italian hard-pack.

Red Bull KTM's Tony Cairoli partially whet the Italian's thirst for glory with his third class victory at the Nations and by going 2-2 to own the MXGP category. Monster Energy Yamaha's Romain Febvre proved again that he can handle the biggest stage of them all and weighed in with France's most important results with that 1-4. Suzuki's Kevin Strijbos was one of the few that made a mockery of claims that the narrow trajectory was hard for passing and for making time.





2016 MXoN





The Belgian defied a season of indifferent form, injury and wavering confidence for one of his best performances of 2016 to plough to a 3-3. In the same colours Jeremy Van Horebeek's win on the YZ250F saw the Yamaha man bring a verve to his MX2 duties that had been lacking through most of a solid if unspectacular MXGP campaign. Herlings was utterly brilliant on his 'big bike' debut and Canada's Kaven Benoit was a rapid starter on the KTM and he had everyone reaching for the official programme to try and identify the '112' race number mired in the top ten.

Kemea Yamaha's Benoit Paturel wrapped a year where he finished third in the FIM MX2 World Championship – but also lost his mother to sickness – by filling the MX2 role admirably for the French. The British were undone by set-up problems, crashes and chain derails while the Germans were wiped out by a heavy crash for Rockstar Energy IceOne Husqvarna's Max Nagl on Saturday.

Then there was Team USA. I have to disagree slightly with my esteemed colleague Mr Matthes in the essential role (and thus reason for remuneration) the Americans play at the Nations. I don't think the American select holds quite the same star power as in the days of Carmichael, Stewart, Villopoto and all those championships (and how much of a staunch Nations supporter RC used to be), and one moto victory in five years indicates that there is not the superiority over the rest of the world that there used to be. I will agree that Team USA add allure to the event and it isn't quite the same without them, and through the tutelage of Roger De Coster they showed their class once more in Italy. A torturous spate of crashes made for a miserable Saturday but the Anderson, Martin, Webb combo turned that around with careful and considerate

speed; perfectly judging that it is consistency and points that delivers that Peter Chamberlain cup at the end of the day. For several seconds after that second moto chequered flag it was looking promising for win No.23 until Anderson had his lid kicked and scraped by a Japanese footpeg. Webb's desperate expression of disappointment and disturbance in the post race press conference was one of the starkest emotional episodes I've seen in sixteen years of covering this annual spectacle. Only a few inches to the twenty year old's right a different kind of zeal was enrapt in the three French riders: just another example of the way the Motocross of Nations moves and shakes people like no other motorsport fixture.









2016 MXoN







2016 MXoN



DUES PAYING...?

By Steve Matthes



The MXoN has come and gone, and with it Team USA's losing streak reaches five in a row (the longest it's been since 1981) and France's win streak is at three in a row. Yes, USA was a lap and a half from winning this event and with Cooper Webb's crash they snatched defeat from the jaws of victory but to me, with Jason Anderson not even being able to line up, it's amazing they were that close to winning the whole thing. Congrats to France, the Dutch and USA for their great rides.

I wanted to expand on something I put out on Twitter this week that seemed to upset some while galvanizing others. Paul Malin, for one, seemed unhappy with my idea while Jeff Emig called me to discuss further. I said that Youthstream should help the USA with its expenses in getting to the MXoN. Besides some top American riders just not wanting to go this fantastic event, I also heard from two teams that they were happy to not go because of the expense they had to lay out. The USA MXoN effort is in danger here folks and apathy and money are the root of it.

My tweet came after Youthstream and Glen Helen pulled the plug on next year's MXoN as I was thinking of how Team USA are, in my mind, the stars of this race. All you have to do to go by one of the trucks a USA rider is pitted out of or watch the USA riders try to navigate the pits.

Whether it's the star power or the fact the fans can see the regular GP riders visit these European GP riders once a year at the race and the shine has worn off, you pick. But the fact is, I've been to MXoN's nine years in a row and worked for Team USA at Zolder, Belgium as a mechanic as well as travelled to Bercy, Geneva supercrosses every year and I've seen it.

The USA riders sell tickets. Bottom line. If you as a country win the MXoN and USA are not there, it's always an * right there. David Vuillemin tweeted out a photo of him on the winning French team this week and made mention about how they won and it was awesome and oh yeah, there was no Team USA there.

Now don't get me wrong, I'm not advocating that Youthstream pay the USA so they make a profit. No, no I'm just saying that there should be some extra help for a team like USA to go to this event, they have the furthest to travel and WAY more expenses than, say, Canada or Australia. Can the USA cut WAY back on the amount of people they send? Yes, absolutely and that's why you can't cover expenses for everyone. There's no doubt that Team USA has become bloated over the years. When I went, we had one mechanic, one helper and a suspension guy for my rider. It seems that number has doubled or tripled per rider over the years.

With costs approaching 40K or more for each rider (two bikes, tickets, hotels) and the AMA only able to pay for two coach tickets, there's a drastic difference there. Yes, there is a small travel subsidy provided to the teams from YS but it's a drop in the bucket for these guys.

Team USA does not make the MXoN but they help it greatly and if compromises can't be made to have the race in the USA every few years to help defray costs, Team USA should use it's drawing power to help keep the MXoN feasible for its teams. As a Canadian I'd love to see the same effort offered to my country but they aren't, and are never going to be, Team USA. I've seen it with my own eyes and now it's time to help out before the Americans can't justify it anymore.

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MAGGIORA PARK.

CLEMENS BOLZ BRAVED THE
SLOPES AND STACKED FENCES IN
ITALY TO GET UNDER THE SKIN OF
THE 2016 MOTOCROSS OF NATIONS







2016 MXoN

















<Color: **BALLER**/>



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> AIR: *2 0 1

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< #ForTheBadTimes />



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<Color: **ABSTRACT**/>



GOING INDOORS...

By Adam Wheeler

The first ever SMX Rider's Cup occurs this weekend and although it is an event that I cannot attend, I will – like a section of the industry – be keen to learn how it is received. Of course promoters Youthstream will be keeping a close eye on public reaction and how many seats at the Veltins Arena are covered but I think the race could be much more than simply another commercial enterprise. Yes, Youthstream have promoted it heavily since the launch of the MXGP season in Qatar this year and have allegedly lobbied the manufacturers hard to be present with strong teams and riders to give the meeting credibility and the best chance of gaining attention as much as gate receipts. However the premise of taking motocross 'indoors' cannot be sniffed at and the prospect of tapping into the ingredients that has made Supercross such a behemoth – city location, amenities, showtime staging, one-evening-hit – for another form of dirt bike racing could have ramifications for the future of motocross in the next five to ten years.

MXGP came close to the formula with the Grand Prix of Americas in the Charlotte Motor Speedway 'Dirt Track' arena setting in August; an evening event that had some rough edges (and was almost blitzed by weather) but was generally well received and it will be curious to see what the might of the North Carolina venue can come up with in 2017 for what is one of the more forward-thinking and open-minded fixtures on the slate. Youthstream have already stated on the record that they do not want to abandon

or neglect the heritage or history of motocross and are smart enough to know that the diversity of Grand Prix and the different challenges and flavours of the tracks and countries is one of the series' strongest attributes. Their reasoning for trying to modernise the sport is to increase the fan base and somehow mix into the 21st century preoccupations and leisure habits of the society that many are still trying to fathom (will digital magazines catch-on?). For sheer experimentation alone then it is to be applauded, and this Saturday the barometer of 'success' should not be measured on the quantity of ticket stubs gathered but whether the track promotes the kind of skill, expressionism, athleticism and close racing that only motocross can create.

Perhaps AMA Supercross promoters Feld are also keeping a close eye on SMX. Since apparent management changes at the top of the company desire a more wide-reaching 'product' in SX so the Americans have looked to expansion for the second-best attended motorcycle racing series in the world that blats through seventeen rounds in eighteen weeks and only leaves the borders of the USA once to step to Toronto. Youthstream and Feld have already held meetings and the Supercross specialists will recognise that the Grand Prix promoters know how to handle a European market largely bereft of a stadium-based platform. If a 'union' for European-based supercross comes about then it will be a seismic shift in the landscape and organisation of dirt bike racing.



SMX has certainly pulled in the star names for its first edition and this was no easy feat (a prize fund undoubtedly has helped and like the Monster Energy Cup will have to stay in place to ensure decent levels of participation). It is where the co-operation of the manufacturers (those also attracted by the convenience and possibilities of the Veltns) is essential and they will also be making an evaluation on how proceedings form in Germany after extending the racing term for their factory teams that began with tests and pre-season races in January, encompassed national championship events along the way and are still contemplating 2017 testing currently. AMA Athletes and teams have a chokka agenda but the works and satellite Grand Prix teams are also in a constant process of work, prep and travel for most of the year.

“Judgement will be made on the 800m track and this could be the crux to whether SMX sticks in the memory...”

Judgement will be made on the 800m track – around half the length of a typical Grand Prix layout – and this could be the crux to whether SMX sticks in the memory. The side-show is bound to be impressive...as it is at most arena-based motorsport happenings. If the track works – passing, close competition, suitably spectacu-

lar – then this could be the bedrock for meetings of a similar ilk to slowly merge into MXGP if other factors (like the business side) can be addressed.

Those who visited the Palais Omnisports arena in Bercy, Paris for Europe’s premier Supercross will remember the vibrancy of a sold-out stadium (while ignoring the fact that the floor was always too tight and small) and it would be wishful thinking for SMX to have the same impact straightaway. Can the thought of motocross in a similar setting and creating the same kind of emotion have grounds for growth? We could see the first shooting buds this Saturday.





SUPERMOTOCROSS

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SEEWER

JASIKONIS

PATUREL



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A close-up, high-contrast photograph of a man's head and ear. The man has short, light-colored hair and is wearing dark sunglasses. His ear is prominent, showing a black earring. The background is a solid, muted olive-green color.

GARETH SWANEPOEL

WANTED MAN

By Adam Wheeler,
Photos by Ray Archer

GARETH SWANEPOEL IS IN DEMAND. ONLY A FEW YEARS AFTER LEAVING THE ADRENALINE RUSH OF THE MOTOCROSS AND SUPERCROSS GATE DROP, THE SOUTH AFRICAN HAS MADE A NAME FOR HIMSELF AS A TRAINER AND MENTOR IN THE USA AND HIS INFLUENCE AND IMPACT WORKING WITH COOPER WEBB HAS BEEN OBVIOUS TO SEE WITH TWO CHAMPIONSHIPS IN THE SAME YEAR. WE ASKED THE FORMER GRAND PRIX RIDER ABOUT THE SHAPE-SHIFT INTO A NEW PROFESSION AND FOR SOME INSIGHT INTO COLLABORATING WITH A TITLE-WINNING TALENT

32 years old and Gareth Swanepoel cuts the sort of figure that makes you think the South African could still do a job on a dirt bike. 'Swanie' sits down in the Alpinestars hospitality at Maggiora for the Motocross of Nations and where his fairytale project together with Cooper Webb would go on to hit another dramatic kink in the road. A veteran of more than a decade of Grand Prix racing and two MX2 Grand Prix podium finishes eventually led to a belated attempt at AMA Supercross and motocross (more podiums) and the birth of a solid link with the Star Racing Yamaha that helped a transition to super-fit athlete into the harbinger of form and physical prowess for others on the team as a trainer/mentor/coach.

We want to talk about the second phase of Swanie's professional career but thinking back to his riding days when he steered factory Kawasaki machinery and was poorly treated in his final year in Grand Prix in 2010 as part of the foundering CAS Honda squad then he probably should have achieved more. In 2007 he was the fifth best 250cc rider in the world but a succession of injuries conspired to wreck any consistent rhythm the former Belgium-resident aspired to maintain and therefore remain at the peak of the category. He was an accomplished sand racer and renowned for his hard work, training and dedication; clearly attributes he was able to transfer into his relatively new vocation. Ironically it would also be the pain and anguish of those many injuries that also caused Swanepoel to open his eyes and horizons to other forms of preparation and orientated him further towards the skills and possibilities to impart that wisdom onto others.

Gareth might be laying some firm roots with the Star team and also in Yamaha but it is his work in conjunction with AMA 250SX and 250MX Champion Webb that has seen his star rise once more. Only a few hours before the 70th MXoN (a contest in which he first represented his country back in 2001) would begin we talked about timing, training and the taming of other motocrossers...

So you were racing Grands Prix, went to the U.S. then transitioned into training and working with other riders. How was stopping competition and finding a new niche?

It was kinda slow! I had a pretty successful few years in the U.S. I really enjoyed it but in my last year with Yamaha I had some bad injuries. Then I spent a year in limbo. I rode for a small team and did a little bit of racing in Australia. For a brief time I was stressing about what I was going to do but halfway through that year Bobby Regan from Star Racing [Team Owner] called me and said: "you should train guys..." Then when I came back from Australia I had to have surgery on my knee. I literally got home from the hospital and he happened to call me. He said, "What are you doing?" I said, "I just had surgery on my knee." He said, "You should train Cooper Webb next year." So I gave Cooper a call and he said: "I'm going to be in California next week." I wasn't sure if he was blowing me off or not. Then he called me that day. We had a good meeting. I said to him: "I can train you and I believe I can help you do what you got to do, but if you don't intend on winning then don't waste my time." That's what sparked him and realized 'this guy's serious, this is the guy I need to train with'. We basically started the next day, and haven't stopped since then.

Were you interested in the training and physical preparation side for other athletes or was it a direction you had to think about?

I had worked with a lot of good trainers in Europe. When I went to the States I did a lot of things differently because I had so many injuries and I kind of started simplifying



things, and I started to look at it from a different aspect. I'm like, 'okay, I can't do the stuff I used to be able to do...so what I can do to still get the most out of everything?' And then I started getting better and stronger and I was like, 'wow'. It [training] wasn't really something I was planning on doing...but when it was brought up to me I felt that I had done so many different things and I could see in America especially that they were so - in my opinion - far behind. Obviously Aldon [Baker] has got it figured out. I was pretty sure if I could help Cooper with the kind of stuff I was doing at the end of my career, he was going to get to where he needs to be a lot quicker.

Do you think it was a combination then of the trainers you'd worked with in Europe and those injuries that gave you a skill of flexibility and awareness?

Exactly. So basically all the stuff I learned from Europe, their theory and knowledge and just everything I took from them...

Can you give an example?

Just the way the fitness tests are done in America. You think they're high tech but they're really not. In America it's just all intensity, and they don't have any kind of specific training. They're just intense. The harder you train, the better you'll be: that kind of mentality. So I think taking what I've learned from Europe in forming a programme around myself, simplifying things and documenting things to improve and extend the last few years of my career kind-of prepared me for doing it for someone else.

Having that knowledge in your head or planned on an iPad is one thing but then imparting it and motivating and working with another individual is a whole other game...

It is. It's kind of weird. It's almost like having intuition. And having guts with a lot of things. It is nerve wracking especially with a guy like Cooper who doesn't question things.

He doesn't ever say: "What about his? What about that?" He just does absolutely everything I say. It is nerve wracking in the beginning of course but I just feel this is what's going to be best, that's what's going to be best for him. He does it and it works out. I've taken everything from what I've learned from four or five trainers I worked with in Europe and put my own spin on a lot of stuff. A lot of what I work on is evolving. Training has got to evolve continuously so that person is getting stronger or if they're coming back from injury or if they're sick or whatever. It's got to evolve continuously in different ways.

Also in the case of young riders then it is about growing physically and coping with injury; which is where your first-hand experience sort-of comes in...

Exactly. I learned so much from being hurt... like injury prevention. I worry so much about that kind of stuff, not just the fitness-side but injury-prevention side. I also help with a lot of bike set-up. I still test-ride, so I try to look at the whole thing. We work on a lot of stuff on the bike, speed-wise, technique-wise, bike set-up, the mental side. I try to look at a lot and analyse and grow.

I don't know if it's because of the Aldon Baker 'effect' but there's a perception that the trainer is very much in the limelight now. He's very much like a right-hand guy. Is he more important or integral in the U.S. to say a counterpart in Grand Prix or off-road racing elsewhere?

I don't know. It could just be that Aldon's set the path for it...but I see Cooper every single day. I work with him every single day. I'm there for every single thing he does, and the rest of my guys too, most of the time. Every time he's at the track I'm with him. Every time he's at the gym I'm with him. Every time he's on the bicycle I'm with him. Everything he does I'm with him. That's just what they want. They want to pay somebody so they can get the most out of everything they're doing. You don't

even have to say anything but just being there he knows, "he's with me. I'm doing the right thing." It's just peace of mind. Looking back maybe that's the way to do it. It would have been better for myself too, but I think it's just a different way. I think the Americans want the most out of everything they do.

You came from South Africa so in Europe you were largely by yourself. You and your girlfriend and that was it. You didn't have a guy there every day. Could it have been maybe overbearing when you were younger? Especially in Europe when you have to move around quite a lot and be very independent on the road?

I suppose so. It just depends on the guy. With someone like Cooper for example it doesn't feel like I'm babysitting. It feels like I'm just there to keep the intensity going. But some of the other guys it is more of a babysitting thing. It's more about making sure they're actually going to get the work done. I think in Europe and in South Africa you grow up with discipline. Americans have intensity, they have work ethic, but they lack discipline. They'll do everything you say but the small things like being on time or doing it 100% correctly or not cutting a corner here or there. Discipline's the hardest thing for them.



Landing with Cooper pretty much off the bat, was that an indication of the work and the knowledge you have or was it a little bit of luck as well? You could have had someone more set-in-their-ways or less receptive or incompatible...

I think so. I think it was a little bit of luck but Bobby Regan is the team owner and I think one of his biggest attributes is that he seems to recognize what each person could be good at. He had said to me from day one that I should be a trainer and I should start with Cooper Webb. So I think he had recognized from working with me as a rider and personality-wise - and then he had Cooper coming through - that pairing us up together would be good. He was adamant that it was what we needed to do. So, definitely, there was a little bit of luck and a lot to do with him recognizing that this is what I should be doing and that's the guy I should be working with.

How was it mentally for you to go from thinking 90% about yourself every day to thinking 90% about other people?

It was hard. That's probably the hardest thing. You don't realize also when you are racing - even though I was a lot more independent - but you are sheltered so much from a lot of day-to-day things that you don't even worry about; things that 'normal' people have to! I was fairly organized as a rider but as a rider you don't realize you have that much to organize! A lot of stuff is done for you. So, like you said, doing things for other people and not yourself is hard.

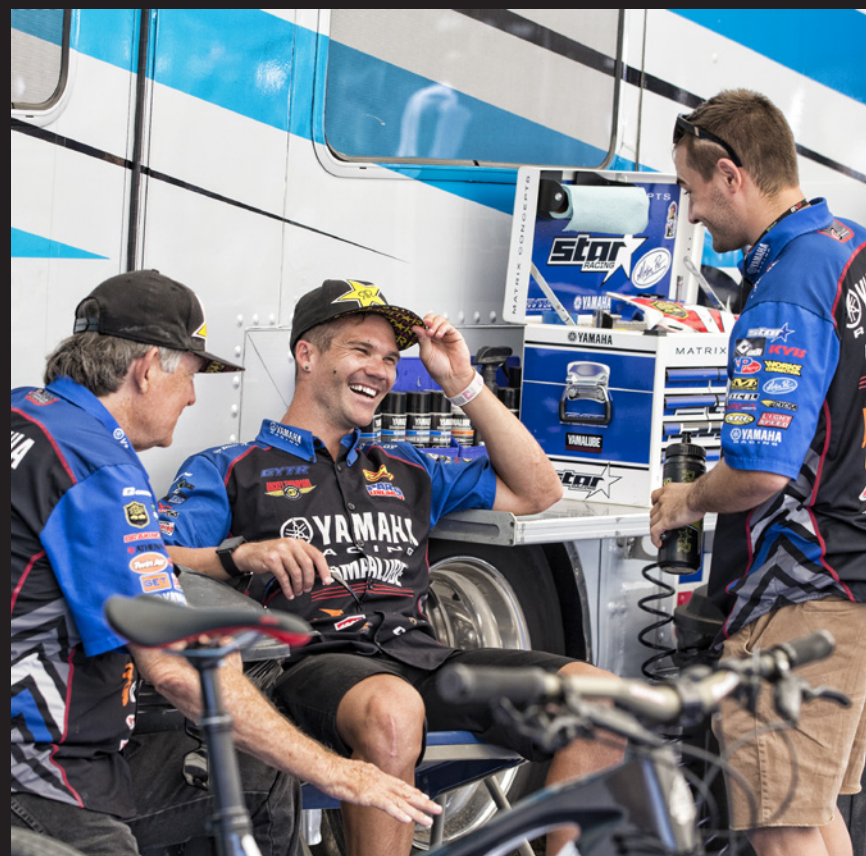
Even details such as what gym are we going to use? Or even getting yourself set up as self-employed?

All that kind of stuff. I use special programs for writing out *their* programs. I knew all the training exercises but I wanted to get a certification so that took me six months to do. And then the programs that I use are quite complicated too, so you got to learn and study. Nowadays it's so high-tech that just your programs are all differ-

ent graphs. You've got to study to realize what they're telling you. So it's a lot of work in the beginning to figure that out. It's really fascinating.

If you're training for yourself you must be looking at every little aspect to be better or faster...but then when you're looking for other people you must be thinking 'will that work for him?' I imagine there's a whole sport science side to it that to tap into it there'd be reams and reams of books...

It's a lot of stuff but you also cannot get too sucked into something. Like the guys that come from a cycling background are really likely to get sucked into the cycling stuff. Or the guys that come from more of a crossfit kind of gym, they get sucked into that kind of stuff. So for me it's all what benefits a rider on the bike. That's all I care about. You can over-look it and be like, 'well what about this, what about that?' But at the end of the day I think I've simplified it to what we really specifically need for our sport and the right intensities and the right volume. It seems to be working really well.



Do you feel that you've got enough knowledge now if someone like James Stewart phoned you up and said: "I need some help getting back to the top." Would you feel confident to take on anyone at any level?

Yeah, definitely. I think so but I definitely don't feel complacent. I feel like I keep continuing to learn, if I can pick up anything from anybody I do, but I definitely feel I have the confidence. Alex Martin is a good example. Obviously he has the talent. Now he's on a good bike so that'll help but he still struggled until he got on my program. Everyone's like 'it's a Cinderella story...' but I could see right away from all the stuff that he was doing to how his body was reacting to that if I could just get him to stick to the way I wanted him to do it that he would be on his way. It took a little while to get him to see that but he's different to Cooper in that he's 26. You've got to explain yourself, you've got reassure him we're doing the right things. But then he goes to the first race and he feels strong and then all of a sudden he was winning. All of a sudden Motocross of Nations, second in the championship, won races... To answer your question I feel confident that I could help anybody.

Is there much to be done on the mental side or do you think the guys gain that aspect through the hard physical work? Do you also have to fine tune the psyche?

I've definitely got to work on the psyche. You've got to realize what to say and when to say it and when to be hard, when not to be hard. I think it comes from my background in South Africa. I have very little tolerance for laziness and messing around. With Cooper I've come to a point where I know him that well so I'll recognise when he's having a bad day but then there have been a few times it was like, 'okay, that's enough, get your shit together'. Then he snaps out of it. A guy like Alex, he reminds me very much of myself. He doesn't want confrontation. He works super hard. So I can relate to him and that's quite nice.

Is it frustrating that there are only so many hours in a day and there are only so many people you can work with? Can you do this sort of gig to a high level remotely?

Yeah. I actually do that. I have a couple guys and I've been contacted by a few in Europe already. Obviously I have my four main guys, also an amateur that I work with hands-on then two or three others, like Thomas Ramette who races in the French supercross. I help him. He's done very well this year. I have a couple South African kids that I help here and there. I can help so much and definitely to improve, but it's not the same [as being there]. I don't want to be like that [a distant trainer] but there's a couple guys that I really like and I want to help.

Is there a crowded marketplace in the U.S.?

It's definitely quite saturated; it's safe to say. I think Bobby and myself have definitely started a trend. Obviously Aldon's the guy that started the main trend, but now Bobby and I began the 'trainer that works hands-on with the team'. So Tyla [Ratray] is working with TLD, and then GEICO hired a guy. At this point they haven't quite figured out what we've got going on...but generally there's definitely very few guys that I feel do the right stuff.

Do you stand for anything? Do you have a particular message or does it depend very much on the individual? If people mention, why not try Gareth Swanepoel? Do you think they would have an idea of what to expect from you?

That is a tough question. I think I am very regimented in a way but I'm also a lot more flexible. I think coming from a rider's background I see things very much from a rider's perspective and all I want is for them to have what they need. I read something Cooper said about me: "He makes me work really hard but he still keeps it fun...without that, I don't know if I would be able to do it." We have a lot of fun with our group. They call it 'Team Swanie'. It's just a great, positive, fun environment that

GARETH SWANEPOEL



every now-and-then I've got to put my foot down and shout at them, but for the most part they actually really enjoy each other's company and they have a lot of fun together. I think that's pretty cool.

Did it take a little while to switch from a European, even British, sense of humour?

Yes, definitely! They still don't have the British sense of humour but Cooper, like I said in the beginning, I started with him when he was just turned 18. So in the beginning he was very calm, very quiet. He didn't quite get my sarcasm and stuff like that, but now he's the first one to go at somebody or take the piss, so to say. He loves it. Now that whole group take the piss out of each other continuously and they really love it. They like being a little different. So it's kind of cool.

Could you have even foreseen Cooper's success? I know a lot of it's on a knife-edge and there's a bit of luck involved in racing but the last two years have been quite phenomenal, really...

I definitely believed he could do it. When I first spoke to him I said, I believe with your talent and my knowledge you can win everything you set your mind to but I never realized he would be as mentally strong as he is. I've never seen anything like that. You've got those standout guys that are just champions...and he's just one of those guys. It's incredible how mentally strong he is. There's still stuff I've got to help him with and he's got a lot more confidence with me in his corner. Even on a social level, as soon as I'm around he's a lot more out of his shell.

What help do you need to give? I guess he's still young so maybe he's a bit impetuous in a race or doesn't have much patience?

He's definitely getting better with that kind of stuff but again people will be like, "you've got to calm the guy down," or "he's done something stupid again," or whatever, but I believe that's what makes him who he is. So I never

want to take that away from him. He has got a little bit of a temper...but I like that. I like that he's fiery and I think that's what makes him win. It's quite sad in a way because he actually doesn't enjoy it much. He doesn't enjoy any kind of training, and he actually doesn't enjoy riding his dirt bike that much but he loves winning. So he's a little bit like [Ryan] Villopoto. It's strange. You don't come across many guys like that. Alex is very professional. He's older.

Do you see some danger in it? You can see Cooper doing a 'Villopoto' and being 25-26 and jacking it all in? A few years ago, when he was even younger, he seemed quite open-minded towards different stuff and racing in different places. Maybe that's your influence as well. It's not just like 'indoors, outdoors, that's my life'...

That's the thing. That's what I keep trying to get over. Coming to this race [the Motocross of Nations], he could have been like all the other guys [non-committal]. He's got a big schedule with his first 450 year in 2017. If he would have been like that then I would have said to him: "this is what it's all about". When you walk away you want to be like 'I've done everything...'. America's got that nice stigma where they're overworked, they're this, they're that. He's 20 years old. He can handle this. So I try just to be positive and then I try to influence him to just try to enjoy his life. He's only young, so he's learning a lot, but for him I don't think it hasn't quite set- in exactly what the success means. I think it will eventually but he's not a big spender. He doesn't spend any money. He doesn't buy anything. Not to say that, hey, you need to go spend your money, but enjoy something from your success.

You must have been asked this before but I'd like your opinion on this 'South African Mafia' that's going on in the US. It seems like if anybody wants to go anywhere they need a South African trainer! Is that just a coincidence or is there a mentality that guys like you, Baker, Louch, Rattray are bringing to the scene...?

That's quite a funny question because I was joking yesterday with somebody because they saw me in my Team USA jacket. They were like, "you got the wrong jacket on." I joked: "there needs to be a South African somewhere if there's going to be success." But I think it has a lot to do with discipline. South Africans have that... It must just be a different upbringing or something, but I know a lot of top South African sportsmen are so disciplined. They'll do whatever it takes, sacrifice whatever it takes to get to where they need to be. I think that kind of work ethic in America is what helps other people achieve what they need, so to say. I think that's the biggest part that the Americans lack. It's not really 'work ethic' because they all work damn hard, but I think it is about the level of sacrifice. So if you can bring that part to them, they can start to sacrifice the things that they need in order to get to where they need to be. I keep saying discipline but that's the biggest thing, the structure and everything to it. I think that's what helps for success.

Is there a part of you as a racer that wishes you had maybe gone to the US earlier? Maybe the ideal circumstances didn't present themselves but do you kind of wish you'd bitten the bullet or made another sacrifice and gone a few years earlier than you did?

FLY RACING

Fly are getting active with their helmet range and a fortnight ago released details of the **Kinetic Elite Onset** lid. The three priorities for the helmet have been ventilation, weight and comfort and the company have poured their resources into this brand new offering. Fly claim that the Kinetic Elite Onset meets or exceeds DOT standards and certification, has progressive Dual Density EPS Technology, has three shells and four EPS (Expanded Polystyrene) sizes for a precise fit, and boasts nine intake and six exhaust vents for optimum airflow. It also has a removable liner for easy cleaning, is POV (Point of View) camera ready, has a replaceable mouth piece and ABS Shell. All for the reasonable price of 125 dollars. There are at least six different designs and liveries to perfectly sync with the Kinetic riding range.

More details here: www.flyracing.com





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BLOWING UP OFF-ROAD

By Adam Wheeler,
Photos: Alpinestars

AIRBAG TECHNOLOGY HAS BEEN FLOATING AROUND MOTORCYCLING FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS. SYSTEMS LOCATED ON BOTH THE MOTORCYCLE AND RIDER HAVE SURFACED AND NOTABLY **ALPINESTARS** TECH-AIR AND DAINESE D-AIR ARE JUST TWO OF THE PROVISIONS DEVELOPED AND HEAVILY PRESENT IN ROAD RACING. ALPINESTARS IN PARTICULAR ANNOUNCED AT THE MOTOCROSS OF NATIONS THE COMING INTENT TO ADAPT AND REFINED TECH-AIR FOR OFF-ROAD; WHICH SEEMED COMPLICATED AND ALMOST UNFEASIBLE CONSIDERING THE NATURE OF RIDING AND RACING MOTOCROSS IN PARTICULAR. WE ASKED HEAD OF MEDIA JEREMY APPLETON FOR SOME EXPLANATION

TECH-AIR & MX



Elbow guards, chest protection, knee braces, increased boot performance, neck braces, reinforced goggles...now I'm struggling. There is not a wealth of rider protection for motocrossers and off-road riders generally but I'm still trying to compute how Alpinestars' impressive torso Tech-Air airbag system could realistically work in MXGP. It is not uncommon for the very best in the world to become unseated once or maybe even twice on their way to a podium finish at a Grand Prix and the utter plethora of bumps, jumps 'moments' and unsettled machinery across the path of a race would seriously make any mortal think twice about the sport when contemplating the full duress of body hits. In short: it's pretty mad. And how would an airbag know when to deploy and also be reset for ease of use?

Alpinestars recently announced their progress and intention with a full first and independent upper body Tech-Air (prevalent in MotoGP and road racing leathers for a number of years now) system and it prompted curiosity. Neck braces have been altered and refined and now helmet technology through the likes of 6D and Leatt are addressing brain rotation and other head injuries; aside from these two strands of protection there has not been much else in the way of significant safety aids for the rider and racer.

Hardly expecting the Italian firm to divulge many details before Tech-Air launches for the off-road market we still pinned down the ever-gregarious Jeremy Appleton for some key questions at the Motocross of Nations. Apparently 2015 MXGP World Champion Romain Febvre has been wearing a set of sensors for the company in races this year and we're shown a set of data for the Grand Prix

of Switzerland at Frauenfeld back in August. The line is fairly regular through the moto until some disturbance and then suddenly a large spike – the moment when the Yamaha rider crashed into the Swiss mud. It is surprising to see such a propulsive and active sport reduced to a squiggly line and even more so to see how the rigours of a moto are actually not as haphazard as you might think. There could well be something in this...

Like neck braces there is a grey area for interpretation over airbags. The poor old collarbone is apparently much maligned with the neck technology and the same is said in some quarters for airbags (although that doesn't stop the conviction of athletes like Marc Marquez and Valentino Rossi) but it's common sense that the energy around the human body in the event of a crash needs to be dissipated somewhere. The effectiveness of airbags is a theme for another story but the potential for what it could do for athletes and competitors in motocross is an exciting new field...

How can you adapt this technology to off-road where a rider has to be that much more manoeuvrable on the bike?

Well, we started looking at off-road back in about 2006 actually, so it has been about ten years now and a number of riders – David Knight in particular – have been running data loggers for a considerable amount of time. The off-road environment presents some particular challenges but we are beginning to see data sets that do make sense, so there is a reasonable understanding of what is going on now with the motorcycle and on the track. Especially where we can see the rhythm of jumps and very bumpy surface riding; the system is very stable. So we have not had problems with potential for full deployment but obviously



determining when a rider is going to crash is a challenge and where a lot of the [development] focus has been. The sensors are looking at what the rider's body is doing as opposed to the motorcycle and we can determine if the rider is fairly stable or not. The analogy I can draw is if you watch helmet cam footage then there is not a huge amount of movement. There is with the bike...but the body is effectively damping a lot of that. So we can track the data but the challenge comes through determining that period in which the rider has started to lose control and we need to get the airbag fired. It is not like the data is very confused and we cannot see anything...we can see some patterns and it is about the interpretation.

The question for the system is about defining a 'moment' in motocross or off-road instead of a crash. Also, it is not uncommon for riders

to fall and then remount; so there has to be practical issues...

It is complicated but you have to remember that the data samples we take are being processed roughly every two milliseconds. To put that in context the blink of a human eye is somewhere between two-three hundred milliseconds so we are sampling data very fast and are able to pick up vagaries very quickly, and in the road racing system what we are looking for is a trend. So if in all of these samples the data is basically saying 'this [situation] is getting worse' then the algorithm reaches a tipping point. The philosophy with off-road is much the same. If a rider is all over the place and losing control and eventually gets flicked over the bars or the front end washes out very quickly in a corner then in real terms we can process data very quickly and while that is going on and see potentially what is likely to happen to the rider.



TECH-AIR

I guess you cannot talk too much yet about where the airbag will be based around the torso and what will be the main priorities for protection...?

Yeah I cannot really answer at the moment because work and ideas are ongoing and I cannot give you a good picture-

So how do you see this fitting into Alpinestars' range of protection when it comes to neck braces, chest protectors and other body armour?

Well, you know we have launched Tech-Air for the Street and in road racing, and that system is also capable of looking after you for some off-road as well. Not in a motocross environment but something more basic and simple. We've had David and Toby Price as well running the data logging systems at tough Enduro events and the Dakar and we see that having an airbag for off-road competition as something very achievable. It will come along... and it will be part of our portfolio of active safety products. I cannot say exactly what form it will take right now but it will be an active system where we will have looked to improve over the current passive protectors.

So what about a lead time between the system being tested and making it to dealer shelves?

It is hard to talk about the critical path and also any reference from the road racing system right now. The racers here will have used the system and the other test riders in all sorts of environments also [before it goes on sale]. I think when we get to the point when the riders are using the system with an airbag regularly then we will be better able to judge that. I cannot give a sensible time scale.

Was the decision to produce Tech-Air for road racing first a practical as well as commercial decision compared to off-road?

Well, talking about off-road we have two objectives. The first is to provide active protection to everybody that rides a motorcycle, ultimately that's the goal. Motocross is fundamental to

Alpinestars and we've been conscious of wanting to provide protection but also as part of the proving process of the race and street system we have been logging data with David, Toby and Marc Coma and others and that was because we wanted to see how far we could push it before we had issues with false deployment. It has actually been very stable and that increased the will to move forward. It is complicated but not insurmountable and our objective is to release a full blown airbag system.

How important is this going to be for Alpinestars? Tech-Air was launched with quite a lot of fanfare for Street a couple of years ago?

For us off-road is still at the epicentre of the company so we, more than anybody, want to bring that level of protection to our riders. So often we've come somewhere like the Motocross of Nations and there have been riders that cannot take part in the event [due to injury] so if we can help alleviate that then and also give something to riders who might have hurt themselves riding, training then that's our goal. It is very important and we are not holding back with it.





WHAT IS TECH-AIR?

ASTARS GIVE A RUN-DOWN ON THEIR TRICKEST SAFETY SYSTEM YET...

The Tech-Air Race system technology is the result of an intensive airbag research and development program, which commenced in 2001 and led to the launch of Alpinestars' first-generation racing airbag in MotoGP in 2009. This was quickly followed by the second-generation full-body protection system in 2013 and the release of the unique Tech-AirStreet system, for everyday use on the road, the following year.

Alpinestars' Tech-Air technology is the world's first and only fully independent and stand-alone airbag system to offer customers critical and strategic airbag protection to the full upper body; chest, shoulders, kidneys and back, the most exposed torso areas during a crash. The system, specifically designed to be entirely self-contained for racing and street riding, functions without relying on external sensors, including GPS.

Tech-Air Street and Road Race system key features – protecting riders on road and race track:

Unique Dual Charge: this patented innovation offers the rider two airbag inflations without needing to reset or recharge the system after the first charge, thus enabling greater convenience and peace-of-mind protection. This allows the rider to crash once, then continue riding while having the same level of protection without the need to immediately change or update the system.

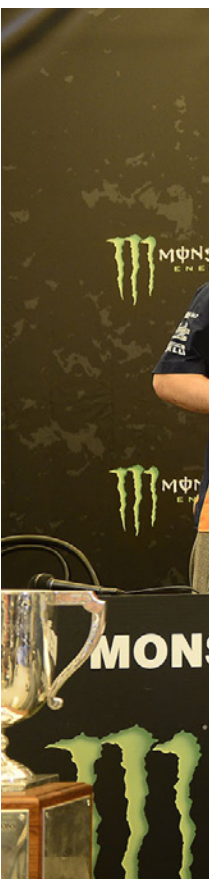
Sophisticated Algorithm: using Alpinestars' exclusive custom analysis software specially developed to detect a crash with the greatest speed and precision, Tech-Air Race once fired is typically fully inflated in 45 milliseconds.

Critical Protection Coverage: The Tech-Air Race is the only system to provide comprehensive, extended upper body protection including chest, shoulders, kidney area and back; all of the most exposed areas during a crash.

Versatility: Tech-Air Race is the only self-contained and stand-alone system to offer critical, first-impact airbag protection. With no physical nor electronic connections between rider and bike the system functions without relying on external and uncontrollable external influences such as GPS.

Freedom to Ride: Tech-Air Race offers unparalleled freedom and versatility. With no connections between bike and rider both systems are completely independent, which means a rider can have class-leading airbag protection on any motorbike, regardless of make or model. Tech-Air Race can be used for performance track riding but also, via a system firmware swap, can be configured to run the specific and uniquely optimized Street algorithm for the ultimate in versatility.







MX THE BOOK

The brainchild of Italian photographers Riccardo Tagliabue and Davide Messori 'MX The Book' is a 200 page, full color, glossy-presented and hardbound publication taking a slightly different view on the sport. Fully endorsed and featuring some famous names both past and present like Michele Rinaldi, Pit Beirer, Jean-Michel Bayle, Stefan Everts, Jacky Martens, Jacky Vimond and Joel Smets, Tony Cairoli, Tim Gajser, Jeffrey Herlings, and Romain Febvre. The stars have recollected moments of their careers and explained what motocross means to them.

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► BCA PROSPECT LIMITED EDITION

By Adam Wheeler,
Photos: Ray Archer/Scott Sports

WINDOWS TO THE SOUL...

HOW SCOTT ARE LEADING THE CHARGE INTO A NEW PHASE OF DEVELOPMENT AND PERFORMANCE FOR OFF-ROAD GOGGLES WITH THEIR NEW 'PROSPECT' MODEL AND HOW PROTECTIVE EYEWEAR HAS EVOLVED OVER THE DECADES

SCOTT, PROSPECT & GOGGLES



‘We’ve been through different sizes, frames and foam, sweat absorption, ventilation systems; there has been evolution but not anything really big.’ A ten times world champion and holder of the record number of Grand Prix wins might know a thing or two about a piece of kit that must rank as one of the most important in a motocrosser’s slim arsenal of protection but perhaps does not get much attention...until it is too late. ‘If something is working properly then you never think about it,’ opines British Champion Shaun Simpson. ‘When it goes wrong then you start the questions: Why is the sweat dropping in? Why is there dust inside?’ As Stefan Everts hinted, the rudimentary riding goggle has not seen a radical overhaul through the decades but there is little doubt that specialists like Scott, Smith (until leaving motocross several years ago), Oakley, 100%, Pro Grip and so on have refined some critical elements of eyewear. So much so that when Oakley launched their Airbrake in 2013 with a Plutonite lens it came with a lofty promise of durability and a price level to match. Comfort and fit, vision, strength and protection have been the main parameters in the development of goggles and long since the days they were made of leather or integrated into a mask.

MXGP, AMA Motocross and AMA Supercross are not only ultimate test beds for bikes and technology but there are plenty of prototype and secret material being worn by riders that encounter the extreme conditions of riding and racing. The two vital motos at the weekend just scratch the service. The miles of training and testing mean that items like new stretch fabrics, boot construction and goggle material also get a thorough grilling. What do the riders themselves think about the passage of time and the changes of their working ‘wares’?

‘You just grow up with the equipment...so you don’t tend to notice it too much but then someone will come with a big step forward like 100% with their Forecast roll-offs and then

the other companies catch up,’ says Monster Energy DRT Kawasaki’s Tommy Searle. ‘I think the goggles continue to get a little bit better, a bit stronger, a bit better technically. Sometimes it is just a simple thing like one year you’ll have some dirt fall down into the goggle whereas next year there is less or no chance of that happening.’

‘They started to become like mobile phones and became more and more sleek,’ reckons Simpson. ‘Look at Scott; the goggles went as small and compact as can be with nice lines and form. Now – just like phones – they have started to get bigger and bigger again – Oakley brought out the Airbrake with the roll-offs and big canister and Scott have gone for massive vision and widening the peripheral with their new Prospect. I think that has been the biggest thing in the last few years...together with the environmental issues around tear-offs which means in a couple of years we’ll be using roll-offs all the time. Pro Grip went to a large roll-off, Oakley had 5mm more and now Scott gone even larger than that for the ultimate view. I don’t think you can get any bigger and there is no space [in the helmet] to do that.’

Suzuki’s Ben Townley – the first ever MX2 World Champion in 2004 – is a little more sceptical on the rate of progress. ‘Maybe the shape of the lens, and Oakley claim that the way you look through the lens with the prism effect and the light is different; although at speed with mud, dirt and sweat flying everywhere I don’t think you can see huge gains in the last sixteen years although these days you can put the goggle on and feel there has been sort some of evolution. I have been an Oakley guy for a long time and the ‘O’ frame is still a very good goggle and that’s what I wore in 2001 and I would have no issue right now having a ‘O’ frame roll-off.’

‘It seems that every five years there is a significant change with goggles so I’d say I’ve seen two big major developments,’ Searle continues.

SCOTT, PROSPECT & GOGGLES





'When I first started it was always Smith and I was with them with for a long time and then Scott and now 100% and I'm impressed with them because they are a new company but have come in with such a strong product.'

'I think the biggest thing has been the introduction of laminates and I think it was around the time of my first GP seasons [2004-2005] that they came in and I believe Oakley were some of the first and I heard someone say once that Oakley's supplier is one of the only ones for laminates in the world,' says Simpson. 'The demand was so high that for one stack of laminates it was five euros or something; ridiculously dear.'

'As a kid growing up I used to have the one-tear-off and you could have four of them on until it looked like you were glancing through the bottom of a milk bottle! So when laminates came in and you could run seven or fourteen for a race that was amazing,' he adds. 'Now some people will use twenty-one or twenty-eight. I used to have roll-offs a lot of the time so to pull away a tear-off and have this full, clear vision was fantastic. Roll-offs were not obsolete by any means then but everyone starting leaning towards laminates. Now it would have to be pouring down for me to use roll-offs.'

'When my Dad [Harry Everts] raced they started with one tear-off, then it was three and then six with one tab up, down, on the sides and you had to remember which one to pull first or they all came off!' recalls Stefan. 'Then you had normal tear-offs but you could only put six on otherwise you couldn't see any more! The electrical roll-off was nice [Scott had a motion-sensor] and cool but it didn't work.'

'I think a lot of goggle companies have been trying to invent something new: a new system for lenses or how to put them in,' the Belgian believes. 'Then the laminates came and the roll-offs. One of the first roll-off systems, from Smith – in my eyes – is still one of the best ones.'

'I remember the Smith Ventilator where you could put the lens in through the top and the roll-off was mounted on the goggle like Oakley have it now...and that was in the mid-90s! It was a huge goggle and you could put in different foam thicknesses depending on the track conditions. It was crazy the kind of inventions were on the market if you look back over the years. The laminates were something that was very smart, cool and nice but at the end of the day we are affecting the environment and our sport is not so 'green' anyway! I think it will get banned and we'll just have roll-offs.'



This summer it was Scott's turn again to make a major play in the market. Oakley stole some thunder three years ago and has a dream roster of athletes that includes Dungey, Roczen, Tomac and Herlings while 100% brought design, panache and value and have their own locker of riders like Searle, Musquin, Webb, Stewart. Scott had foraged around with eye-catching ventilation systems and a patented fit mode for their Tyrant model that permitted the rider to angle the frame to fit exactly on their face but with the recent launch of the Prospect they have already made play for the biggest field of vision and security through their lens locking system. The company have forty-five years of experience in the field and manufacturing plants in the USA and Austria (weirdly in the same small town as KTM – Mattighofen) and have been able to turn around and innovate quickly with their products...even if goggles are a more time-consuming due to the refined manufacturing procedure and the sheer cost of the moulds.

'It has been about two and a half years in development,' reveals Chief Engineer of the Scott Sports Division Bertrand Didier, a man at the firm for twelve years and an authentic expert in all aspects of eyewear for a number of different sports and activities. 'It wasn't just another goggle development. We knew it had to be a new high-end product to replace the Tyrant. We couldn't just do 'the usual' upgrades. We had to think 'out of the box' and I don't think we ever challenged the engineers and designers as much to meet our expectations and I don't think there is anything on the Prospect that compares with our other goggles. Face fit, lens shape, strap, lens lock; all these things are different. Maybe the way we clip the nose-guard in is the only similar thing!'

'It is not so easy to make goggles fit all helmets,' says Scott Eyewear Product Manager Kevin Flier while holding the significantly larger Prospect in his hands with the WFS roll-off also bring a new industry reference point for size and canister position. 'It looks easy now when you check out the frame and see with a 1cm structure we include everything but the first prototype meant we had some bulky pieces. We had to work on the dimensions, how to mould and integrate the pieces. We did 3D modelling and printing for prototyping and even cut some pieces with scissors to get the right fit and compatibility.'



'The big step for goggles in the last ten years revolved around fit elements, so things like three layer foam and other material that we actually implemented in this product like Thermofoam and then sweat reduction through barriers and evolution with the thickness,' he says. 'Lens' colours did not change a lot, neither did fit integration with helmets because something like that has to stay general and helmets have not changed vastly. So lens retention and field of vision were the big targets. Due to more powerful bikes, and riders getting more athletic you are getting harder impacts on the lenses. This won't break the lens but it might make it pop out and this is one problem we wanted to tackle on the new goggle.'



Overall the amount of engineering and thinking behind a simple goggle frame is something of a surprise. 'On the Prospect our main goal was to reach the largest field of vision, so we looked at everything we could do to achieve that; not only the lens but also the thicknesses and dimensions. It was a big commitment. We have more pieces – like the outrigger – so the manufacturing is not complicated but the assembly is one of the key factors.'



SCOTT, PROSPECT & GOGGLES

'As a Pro rider you are using them more than the average guy,' says Simpson. 'You're probably using double or triple the amount of times and they wear quicker. Where Scott has put their price in the market is pretty much right in the middle, so they will get a lot of sales there. Other less expensive brands might use a cheaper grade of plastic for the roll off canisters that are more likely to shatter or let you down. Things like the Lens Lock System does make a difference. Oakley came out with something right at the top of the range and they wanted to charge for it. I do feel that Scott's quality is as good as it gets...and they have priced it better. It is 2016 and 100 euros is where it is at for a set of goggles these days.'



It was a sizeable investment (moulds alone can cost up to almost half a million euros) and goggles now are starting to climb higher and higher in price for what is essentially a safety - as well as a practical - product. The Prospect - with a spare lens, laminates and a bag also in the box - comes in at just under one hundred euros (around seventy-eighty pounds) but the Oakley's cost more while 100%'s offerings around the Racecraft and Accuri are definitely more wallet-friendly. 'When we said we challenged the engineers and designers it was not only on the final product but we knew it had to come in under the 100 euro mark,' says Fleer. 'We had to include all these cool innovations and they had to find a smart way to make it work for this price point. We had people on social media saying that it looks similar to the Airbrake but when we told them it was half the price and they were saying: "how is that possible?" We had plenty of ideas for a goggle priced at 200 euros - like we do for wintersports - and for an engineer that's a dream and a nice playground!'

There are many options in dealerships and at a range of prices. For some, goggles are the most dispensable piece of their equipment. They cop plenty of abuse, from roost to muck and strap wear. In the racing world Pro athletes find out very early on how crucial it is to be very particular and disciplined in regards to this area of their kit bag.

'I always prepared them very well and took a lot of pride in them,' reveals Townley. 'My Dad was always quite staunch on 'there's no point riding without goggles'. I think it was this year actually that he said it was the first time he ever see me take my goggles off and it was in England in the second moto.'

'It all starts with preparation and I believe in checking the goggle over, mounting the lens properly, mounting the tear-offs, placing any sealing strips, that roll-offs fitted correctly: there is a process and over time and with experience you know what to look out for,' explains Simpson. 'I would say 99% of goggle failure is through bad prep or unless a lens pops out. I'm a great believer in 'if you have a problem once, you should definitely not have it twice'. I do think that goggles can cost you a race win or good result. If you are eating roost from someone the whole moto you need to be able to see where you are going! You need enough tear-offs in the tank and the roll-offs need to last to the end. I am really annoyed – no matter what the conditions – if I don't make it to the end of the race without my goggles on.'

'The worst thing was using a brand new roll-off almost every race to lower the risk of it breaking,' says Everts. 'It pissed me off that I'd break the strap to pull it across. That first version was still the best; we used to take the dirty roll out and clean it and then roll it back up! You'd never see a rider do that now.'

'One bad memory was Suzuka [Japan] in '92,' he smiles. 'At the time we had three motos and we had a thirty second board and when that came up I broke the plastic strap on the goggles. I took off without any goggles and after one lap came into the pits but I didn't have any spares prepped so I rode for three more laps looking pretty stupid but the roost was so bad. It was a tough one! Another time was at San Marino – in '96 I think and I lapped Marnicq [Bervoets] in the second moto when he was leading the championship - and it was the year when we had a rainstorm just after the practice. I had almost finished the moto but had broken the roll-off film and when I wiped the goggle I had the tiniest field of vision but kept them on until the finish line. I kept that goggle, mud and all, and added it to my collection.'

'Sometimes in the conditions we race in water can creep in or the lens fogs up,' says Searle. 'You cannot ride with a snorkel! Sometimes it's that wet on the track that you are going to have an issue now and again. 100% have the Forecast roll-off system that is very reliable and you can trust the goggles.'

'Throughout my career I was pretty strict on my goggles,' Townley states. 'Every human head is different and I felt that the Oakleys 'sealed' very well on my face. At one point I had to change due to a team contract and had some issues with the fit. So it is important. The brands have really changed their game with roll-offs and not so much with tear-offs. It is a personal thing.'



Goggles are bigger and they are more resistant while also not compromising on vision quality and even style in some respects. Simpson thinks that companies are striving towards biodegradable tear-offs but some of the other people we spoke to in MXGP advocate the future importance of roll-offs. Where else can they go? If models like the Airbrake and Prospect are maximising universal helmet space then the walls are closing in for other gains and modernisation. 'I think we achieved all our objectives with this one,' advocates Didier. 'We have field of vision but ventilation is always a topic; is there something we can adapt? A good starting point for the next model is



always 'what didn't change in the past few years?' It is quite an interesting process. For example: the face foam. It is something that pretty much every brand has but it is still a problem for riders because you see them with pads in their helmets. They need some very special materials and technologies and I think this is a way we can differentiate ourselves. It is a basic thing but can bring a lot of function.'

With modern dirt bikes and race bikes customisable at the hit of a laptop keyboard button, the issue of electronics is seeping further and further into motocross. It is a far-fetched proposition concerning rider's gear (a visible HUD in a rider's goggles or vision?) but it is also not an impossible one. Didier barely blinks when we raise the topic. 'I'm not sure...but it is a question that comes up and would maybe work. We had a HUD on a winter goggle five years ago and we thought about transferring it to MX. We worked with an external company and integrating the technology because we are not an electronics company. We know how to do eyewear, to produce and market it. Maybe it could work in connection with the bike and

things like RPM and gearing? But then does it make sense? And how easy would it be to hook up with different bike models and the upgrades? We still have some ideas of course...' 'There is that much going on in motocross that there is not much time to relax,' says Simpson when quizzed on the possibility. 'In MotoGP you might have a second on the main straight where you could look at something like that. In our sport there is not really a second where you can take your eyes off the ball...there might be a stone or something else in the ruts you need to avoid. I think you'd have to adapt the helmet or make the goggles even bigger to fit that in. I don't know if seeing the lap-times or something in your field of vision would be beneficial or even possible.'

A pursuit of the masses but a sport far left of the mainstream; motocross is still the ideal petri dish for ideas and creation for those involved with a commercial and a passionate eye. Goggles might be some of the unsung heroes of a rider's cosmetic make-up but are further proof that the sport simply does not stand still.



ANSWER

Answer leave little on the table when it comes to a comprehensive line-up of riding gear thanks to their variance on Alpha, Elite and Synchron lines. Helmets, protection and lifestyle garments can also be found in the chunky catalogue for 2017. The subject of apparel sees some fetching full-cotton t-shirts catch the eye and here's our pick. We've yet to pull one over our heads so we cannot comment too much on the U.S. sizing for Europe and whether a size 'L' could actually have a drowning effect but we'll provide more details when the kind folks at Tucker Rocky can let us have a closer look at the clothing. For design and cool factor then you cannot go too wrong. Each Tee will set you back 29.95 euros and can be ordered from Answer dealers.







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MotoGP

GRAN PREMIO MOVISTAR D

MOTORLAND · SEPTEMBER 25th · Rnd 14 of 18

MotoGP winner: Marc Marquez, Honda

Moto2 winner: Sam Lowes, Kalex

Moto3 winner: Jorge Navarro, Honda

MARC MADE

Photos by CormacGP www.cormacgp.com
Blog by Neil Morrison

ANOTHER WEEK TO GO UNTIL MOTOGP STARTS A THREE WEEKEND RUN THROUGH JAPAN, AUSTRALIA AND MALAYSIA AND THE ANNUAL BOUT OF ALMOST A MONTH ON THE ROAD FOR THE SERIES. EVEN THOUGH 2016 HAS PROVED TO BE SOMETHING OF A REVELATION IN TERMS OF 'WHO WILL DO WHAT?' MARC MARQUEZ HAS SURVIVED AND PROSPERED TO THE POINT WHERE HE NOW HAS FOUR WINS AND 52 POINTS OF ADVANTAGE (TWO RACES WITH FOUR TO GO) AFTER HIS SUCCESS IN ARAGON. MOTORLAND SAW THE FIRST OF THE 2016 CHAMPIONS CROWNED WITH BRAD BINDER BECOMING SOUTH AFRICA'S FIRST NO.1 IN THIRTY-SIX YEARS. READ ON FOR THE ESTEEMED NEIL MORRISON'S BLOGGING DEBUT

E ARAGÓN

MotoGP ARA







Aragon remains a 'Rossi-free' zone for VR46 as the Italian (right) still needs to celebrate at MotorLand. He was unable to complete a Spanish 'triple' this season after earlier success at Jerez and Catalunya. MotorLand also saw Sam Lowes (below, right) back to his sliding best...









HEAD CASES...

By Neil Morrison

Aragon was quite a weekend for Danilo Petrucci. Aside from revealing he and teammate Scott Redding are currently locked in an intra-team championship to receive a full factory GP17, and then causing that same teammate to fall in the race, incurring a ride through penalty, the Italian's usual cheery demeanour wasn't evident on Saturday. Instead Petrucci's brow was furrowed in concern.

That morning he was the unfortunate victim of Pol Espargaro's crash at turn two. As the Italian exited pit lane, he was unaware of an errant satellite Yamaha M1 careering in his direction. The resulting collision caused him to fall with some force.

"I was conscious," he said of his first thoughts after the crash. "But I didn't remember where I was. I said, 'OK, my bones are all together,' so I came back to the pits. But when I went back out I didn't remember where I was. I was quite scared." Speaking the following day, he expanded on those laps at the end of the session, when along with pushing for a top-ten lap time, he found himself wondering in which way the track was headed. "It was quite strange to be on the bike, after two days at the same track, and not remember which corner I was at," he said.

For a sport that stresses the importance of 'matter' operating north of the eyebrows, Petrucci's words were, at best, worrying. His admission that he was failing to piece his memory from certain points that morning suggested he was suffering from some form of concussion.

How then was he cleared to complete six further flying laps in that same session? At that point Petrucci was not only placing anyone with whom

he was sharing the track at risk, the potential implications of the Italian falling again that morning, or indeed, that weekend don't bear thinking of. Concussion and then continuing as normal has known side effects, with nausea, headaches and fatigue common complaints. But twice can lead to serious consequences. Second-impact syndrome occurs when a second concussion is sustained before the effects of the first have diminished. The brain can swell rapidly – a potentially fatal occurrence.

So was this a case of negligence on the part of doctors at hand? In defence of those medical officials responsible for Petrucci after this incident – Dorna's medical team, doctors from the circuit medical centre - the Pramac man was ably darting through the gravel trap soon after the incident. Indeed a glance at Petrucci's pace in that same session after his tip off do not point to a rider hazily questioning his own whereabouts, much in the manner of a booze-addled pensioner, found outside his local, sodden with drink at 3am on a Sunday morning. Far from it. Of the six flying laps he completed, only one was in excess of six tenths than his fastest time.

Race director Mike Webb was also convinced he had received the correct medical care in the wake of his spill. "The CMO, the chief medical officer and the medical director and race control are super strict every incident during practice and in race obviously," he said after race day at Aragon was completed.

"They review the video immediately to see what happened to the rider. Did he strike anything? Was it powerful? Did he just slide? Any doubt whatsoever, that rider is obliged to be taken directly to



the medical centre for a check-up, the neurological checks before he's let back on the bike again." Yet one is left to wonder how Petrucci – visibly dazed when his helmet was removed in the Pramac garage – was allowed to exit pit lane so soon after the incident itself.

“Perhaps any rider with scratches on his or her helmet should be forced to sit out a certain amount of time...”

MotoGP introduced the SCAT3 assessment tool ahead of the 2015 season, following the lead of other motorsports, such as NASCAR. Used by medical professionals to probe if athletes are showing any clear signs of concussion, the checklist states: “if any of the following signs are observed ... the athlete should stop participation ... and not be permitted to return to sport the same day if a concussion is suspected.” Those signs include ‘Disorientation or confusion’, ‘Loss of memory’ and wearing a ‘Blank or vacant look’.

According to a person with access to the garage that shall remain unnamed, it was clear from basic observation that the Italian was not fully compos mentis. Supposedly Petrucci was not even completely sure of the identity of the person on-screen when it was transmitting live pictures of himself.

If Petrucci had been properly assessed – yet slipped through the net - it begs the question: does a more thorough kind of test need to be imple-

mented? Webb insists the current procedure is rigorous to the point of inciting hostility. “[The checks are] super strict. The riders get pissed off because they’ve been marched off to the medical centre often with nothing wrong. But they err on the side of caution.”

In football for instance, a recent ruling ensured an independent doctor is onsite at Premier League matches to assist club doctors in diagnosing potential signs of concussion. Does MotoGP need to employ a further specialist to conduct further checks on injured riders? Or perhaps they should insist any rider with scratches on his or her helmet is forced to sit out a certain amount of time – or indeed an entire session until a correct prognosis is formed.

It's worth noting the medical team did correctly judge Stefan Bradl to have received concussion in a morning warm-up incident at his home grand prix just three months ago. Yet how Petrucci was allowed to compete so soon after the incident needs to be reviewed. That it came during a weekend in which Niccolò Bulega was fined for making an ‘inappropriate’ gesture – nothing more than the showing of his middle finger – left one questioning whether the line between what matters most and least to most sensible heads in the sport had – like Petrucci’s memory - become slightly blurred.

Front tyre woes and vibration issues for Dovizioso dropped the Italian outside of the top ten at Aragon...









Fresh from notching victory for the eleventh season in a row and in a career that spans fourteen years with the taste of success (as well as being the fourth different winner from Spain this year in MotoGP) Pedrosa was the victim of excess front tyre degradation and drifted back to sixth spot

FEATURE

CLINICAL

A HAVEN OF HELP IN MotoGP

By Tammy Goral

Photos: Clinica Mobile/CormacGP



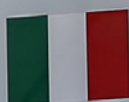
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The Clinica Mobile has long been synonymous as the place where Grand Prix riders, mostly Italian, entered wounded and emerged ligaments strapped, joints taped, contusions treated and fears allayed to take to the track again the next day. For almost forty years, since 1977 in fact, the small medical facility has been an indispensable part of the GP paddock. Boasting a core group of seven doctors, double that in physiotherapists, and at least two radiologists it is a vast operation with a similar sized collective servicing WorldSBK. Heading the MotoGP contingent is Dr. Michele Zasa and Tammy Goralí recently sat down with the Italian to ask about his job, the changing role of the Clinica Mobile since the days of founder Claudio Costa and what its like to treat the very best motorcycle athletes...



It seems like a lot has changed since you took over as coordinator so what was your philosophy when you started...?

At the end of the day the philosophy is the same and if you don't follow the core philosophy from the past than you cannot go on with this job...because it is not a normal job. The main philosophy is to be here 24/7 for the riders, try to help them as much as possible in the best way and to develop a close relationship which means not just giving medication but to be there in a time of need and personal support. They become more than patients, they become friends and this is what we keep

from the initial philosophy of Dr. Costa. Apart from that there are of course some changes from a technical point of view, cause I am 37 now and I started when I was 35 so you bring something new, updated media and social media approach, and new technology and the work methods we use. I am not a fan of new technologies; if something is new it don't necessarily mean that's its good and better than the old way but it's always worth looking into it and in some cases it's good to try new developments and to keep an open mind to a new way of working. That's why we change to digital x-rays and a new partnership with its developer; it allows us to see very small fractures. In terms of physiotherapy we took it a step forward from what Dr. Costa started as we have more machinery...but in this case its more important to have good physiotherapists with good hands however we complete the work with the machinery. We also introduced in the last few years a recorded database that we use to keep the data about the riders and how we treated them. We also developed a riders App that helps us follow-up as once a patient comes in. I record the medication I give to them so I can look for previous treatments, I can see their past injuries, past medication and so on.

Is this available to the doctors outside of the circuit who treat also the riders?

No, at the moment this is only available to us to follow-up but we use it when we get in touch with the doctors at their homes or hospitals with doctors who operate on them. I also check the app once a rider has doping control to see what he got so we can declare it to the doping control as in the WADA regulations.

Regarding personal doctors for the athletes are you in touch with them?

Sometimes, it depends on the rider and if they want to put me in touch with them. Our advantage these days - compare to the past - is that



The staff in the Clinica Mobile, which languages can they speak?

They are mainly Italians but they can speak all the main languages” Spanish, English and French

So that must be a relief for the riders from all territories to be able to talk with you directly...

You should ask them but I think so. Another issue from the past is that we had many people working in the Clinica Mobile and many of them did only three races a year. Now what we try to do is that besides me and a number of physiotherapists who do all the races in a season, the rest will do at least ten races; it creates continuity as it ensures we understand the riders’ needs but it also creates trust. It is a matter of knowing your face, knowing who you are, knowing likes and dislikes.

There is a new app we are still developing for riders only and it will help them book physiotherapy sessions; we started it for MotoGP riders and with time to Moto2 and Moto3. The majority of the riders come for treatments, and if they have their personal physiotherapists like Dovi, we know them and work with them and replace them in case they cannot attend a race during the season. But Dovi for example is old school, he doesn’t do physio too much but when he needs it we are here for him. Andrea Iannone and Valentino Rossi used to have their own physiotherapist but they heard two years ago that we are good so they started to use members of our team and are very happy with our service. There are different types of riders. For example you have old school riders who don’t like treatment at all as they are afraid to aggravate old injuries, some who only use it if they have an injury and some of them not even in case of injury as they say: “On the motorbike you just need to open gas and not care about fractures and stuff...” but most riders are not like this anymore. On some level I like it when they are old school because personally I am fascinated by the ‘man and machine versus

I can speak three languages English, Italian and Spanish and it helps a lot. It helps me to connect with the riders. You can be the best doctor in the world but being able to speak with the rider makes them feel safe and more comfortable and I can talk with their home doctor if they’d like me to do it. We noticed that some of the young riders in Moto2 & Moto3 are not followed very professionally by doctors so what we do is raise awareness to always check what they take for medication. It is your fault if you don’t check if something is allowed or not and nowadays it is really easy to do with the WADA App; all you need to do is enter the medication name and will tell you if you can take it or not. Any professional rider and team can go on that app.



nowadays you need to be professional and when you're injured you need to do the physiotherapy and all you can in order to recover. Some of them are very spoilt! You can see some Moto3 riders coming here four times a day just for massages which is a bit too much, 2-3 times a day simply for massages, not for rehabilitation so we have to apologize and ask them sometimes to come back the next day. At the European rounds we have six masseurs and at the overseas we have seven. We do a lot of treatments; in Jerez we broke the record with 400 physio sessions and 200 medical sessions from Thursday till Sunday. It's a lot; we needed physio ourselves at the end of this weekend! It's interesting as [Jerez] is a demanding track, there is a lot of forearm overload; not exactly arm pump but just overworking the arms and you have to work on it and we help resolve the situation. When we travel overseas with the championship for three weeks on the third week we have many cases of flu.

It must be tricky sometimes with confidentiality in such a public place and sport...

The riders trust us because we keep their health issues private, of course we need to give updates of some riders' situations but our main goal is the same: to maintain the safety of the riders. Usually there are no big secrets out there. If a rider crashes there are some broken bones to be expected but it's the same in any medical field there is privacy and it is respected and riders know that. That's why they tell us everything and at the same time we know that we cannot share it unless a rider tells us. It's no problem. In case we need to prepare a statement, the rider and team approve it first.

So what happen with Dani Pedrosa last season?

We did not issue a statement, it was the team. In Dani's situation he was treated by his own doctor and did not consult with us even though we have a good relationship. We respect his decision. We take great care in the statement we put out especially if it's important and sensitive.

Without dropping names, did you ever catch riders not sharing the full medical situation or making light of something?

I would say no.

A few years ago Nicky Hayden told me that he tells everything to his family doctor but to the doctors at the track he keeps things back...

It was a few years ago, now the situation is different and we have a very good relationship with Nicky because of the language. Once a rider finds somebody they trust and can share their issues with then they do. We are spending four in every 10 days with the riders, we respect them, we give them good service, we speak their language. On Friday you see a line of riders' scooters parked outside. At the end of the day if you give good service and keep their privacy they come and share it all. I even have riders calling me from home to consult about what their home doctor gave them and I recommend what they should do. This is good for our on-going treatments but on the other hand when I am at home I want to relax but I am pleased that they trust us to call me like that.

How do you keep up to date with all the new technologies on hand while being on the road most of the time?

We work for six or seven months of the year so we have some time. For example, we organize conventions at our headquarters, we do research and we look out for new ideas but I feel that sometimes there is a rush for the new and sometimes the new is not needed.

Does any of the knowledge you gain end up benefiting riders on the streets?

We do gain a lot of knowledge in treating riders from accidents but it's a bit difficult as the riders you have here are different: you need to get them back on the bike as soon as possible as this is their job, this is their passion. If you have an injured patient at home they will want to take their time so the philosophy of the patient is very different. Here you also take small risks every once in a while, of course with head injuries you cannot do that but other injuries you can, like a small break in your finger. If the rider wants to take a risk as he is racing for the championship he can do that. It won't be the same with injuries with non riders or, for example, an elderly patient coming to the hospital. So the fields of activity are very peculiar. We do try to share all of our knowledge in conventions or a scientific paper that we recently published on an international journal that we did together with Stanford University but it's not easy to put it to practice as we deal with specific type of patients.

Are sometimes riders too eager to go back on the bike too soon? Do you try to cool them down?

I am under the assumption that the riders trust their doctors; my position is to give them honest advice and it's not always easy. If they come here and they state they want to race but it is not reasonable then it's not good for us to approve it. They will lose their faith in us, so I don't want to push for racing at all costs. At the same time, we have to understand that they are here to race the World Championship not to play the PlayStation so at this level it acceptable to take some minor risk which won't put your life in danger. So if you have a small fracture in your finger which is just painful and you can manage the pain with injection I will explain to them that if the crash again it might be dislocated and they might need surgery but that's a common risk as they might need surgery if they crash without a fracture.

Do you warn them on the long terms effects that injuries might have on their post racing lives?

It depends on the type of injury but we do try to explain very clearly any long term risk. For example on the small finger fractures there won't be an effect but in other cases there might be and we have to tell them in advance. We see the legendary racers in the paddock who say that when they were younger they pushed to race with injuries when it wasn't an important and now they carry stupid injuries and have problems walking and they wished they got advice. So we pay attention to the full scenario. These days the FIM and Dorna pinpoint head injuries; if you have a head injury you cannot race the next day. We are very strict with this and I am the first one to stop the riders from racing. There is a risk as your reactions might not be as quick as always and if you crash again the impact will be very severe.

One of the peculiar medical stories was Casey Stoner's lactose intolerance when he said that he felt dizzy and even threw-up in his helmet a few times. Would you have let him race?

It's hard for me to judge as I wasn't here and I was only introduced to Casey in the last winter testing and every condition is different so it's hard to say yes or no, all I can say in regards to Casey is that it was a shame to lose him as a rider. And as a passionate fan of motorbikes it was also sad for me we lost Ben Spies as I think he was a huge talent, he did so well in AMA, WSBK and then came here and got lost with injuries and bad luck. Just imagine the grid we'd have now plus Stoner plus Spies, it would have been great.

Do you collaborate with manufacturers of protection gear?

Some of them are very kind in supporting us, as this costs a lot of money but we also attend their meetings with IRTA where we share our points of view. We are the ones who see the riders after the crash, we see their injuries, we

see the suit, boot, gloves immediately after the crash so we have an interesting input for them. Although we are not technicians we can give exact impact description on the riders.

Do you ride yourself?

Yes, but I don't have too much time for it, I ride a Husqvarna Supermoto but I don't go on the track but just to commute to work. I prefer cars and karting. Not many people know this but I am a huge Ayton Senna fan and I started working as a doctor in Imola as homage to him (1st May 1994). As the Clinica mobile was based there they supported us from time to time and we were introduced. Dr. Costa liked the fact that I spoke a few languages so he took me in. Two years later, I took over. So you can say everything started from Ayton Senna. I love karting, sometimes when there is a karting circuit around we go after work a few members of the Clinica to race, we are very competitive so we sometimes crash. We release the work tension but we all have the racing tension...





CLINICA MOBILE

How does one become a physiotherapist here?

We need people with experience, preferably in sports, we have staff here that worked in football, in F1 and if you don't have experience and want to work, we are sorry, go get experience somewhere else. To come here you need to be ready. Once someone joins our team they learn thing particular to our sport such as taping, massages the riders need, its totally different but you need a strong background to learn these things.

Can you watch the races?

We have a small TV in the Clinica. People think we go to races and we have fun all the time but it's not like that. We start at 7AM in the morning, we finish at 8PM and we watch it on TV as we treat riders when other sessions are on. So it's not so much fun as it might seem. It's work and we have to do it but it's a fantastic job.

Do you have a favorite rider?

No, when you work here you cannot have one. Usually we are 'for' the riders that we just treated because if they do well, it means we did our job well. For example: the success of Danilo Petrucci when he recovered from hand injury. He is a wonderful rider but also a good person, he is a lovely character.







YCF

Prolific French mini-bike manufacturer YCF – a brand that seems to be the pick of many MX stars on both sides of the Atlantic - were proud to highlight their 50E last week. The electric bike comes with a lithium battery that only weighs 36kg and has the potential of 90 minutes at full throttle; it is the ideal pick for kids from the age of 3-7 and for their first step with motorcycling. Have a look at the website for more tech specs:

<http://www.ycf-riding.com/product/ycf-50e-14>



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Monster Energy Girls
By Clemens Bolz







'On-track Off-road' is a free, bi-weekly publication for the screen focused on bringing the latest perspectives on events, blogs and some of the very finest photography from the three worlds of the FIM Motocross World Championship, the AMA Motocross and Supercross series' and MotoGP. 'On-track Off-road' will be published online at www.ontrackoffroad.com every other Tuesday. To receive an email notification that a new issue available with a brief description of each edition's contents simply enter an address in the box provided on the homepage. All email addresses will be kept strictly confidential and only used for purposes connected with OTOR.

Adam Wheeler Editor and MXGP/MotoGP correspondent

Ray Archer Photographer

Steve Matthes AMA MX and SX correspondent

Cormac Ryan-Meenan MotoGP Photographer www.cormacgp.com

Simon Cudby AMA SX/MX Photographer

Matthew Roberts Television Presenter and WSB correspondent

Gavin Emmett TV commentator/Presenter and MotoGP Reporter

Núria García Cover Design

Gabi Álvarez Web developer

Hosting FireThumb7 - www.firethumb7.co.uk

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